

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-12 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-02 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12

INT-08 COA-02 EB-11 COME-00 NEA-10 GAC-01 TRSE-00

MBFR-03 SAJ-01 RSR-01 (ADP) W
----- 003918

P R 221830 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3639

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION USUN

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION OECD PARIS

USEC BRUSSELS

USMISSION GENEVA

NISRA/ KEFLAVIK

COMICEDEFOR

CINCLANT

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E. O. 11652: NA/ A

TAGS: PBOR IC UK

SUBJECT: FISHERIES DISPUTE: REACTION OF ICELANDIC POLITICAL
LEADERS

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. REACTION OF ICELANDIC POLITICAL LEADERS TO
BRITISH DECISION TO SEND ROYAL NAVY WITHIN ICELANDIC
50- MILE FISHERIES JURISDICTION HAS BEEN UNIFORMLY ONE OF DISA-
PPOINTMENT AND INDIGNATION. COMMUNISTS AND OTHER LEFTISTS
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HAVE BEEN MOST EXTREME, BUT EVEN MODERATE AND PRO NATO AND WESTERN POLITICIANS HAVE JOINED IN CRITICISM. BRITISH MOVE HAS TENDED TO OBLITERATE POLITICAL DIFFERENCES AND UNITE ALL ICELANDERS ON ISSUE CONSIDERED TO BE OF PARAMOUNT NATIONAL IMPORTANCE. MOST LEADERS HAVE URGED THAT NEGOTIATIONS NOT BE RESUMED UNTIL BRITISH HAVE REMOVED NAVAL UNITS. MANY HAVE CRITICIZED NATO FOR FAILING TO PREVENT BRITISH MOVE. GENERAL FEELING IS THAT NATO AND BY ASSOCIATION, THE ICELANDIC DEFENSE FORCE, HAS LOST SOME SUPPORT BY BRITISH ACTION. PRIME MINISTER STATES HE MIGHT RAISE MATTER DURING REYKJAVIK SUMMIT CONFERENCE WITH PRESIDENTS NIXON AND POMPIDOU NEXT WEEK. END SUMMARY.

2. REPRESENTATIVE COMMENTS OF MAJOR ICELANDIC POLITICAL LEADERS IN STATEMENTS SINCE MAY 20 ARE AS FOLLOWS:

3. PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT ICELAND WOULD " NEVER YIELD TO FORCE" AND THAT THE RESUMPTION OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH BRITISH WAS " OUT OF THE QUESTION" UNTIL WAR SHIPS WERE WITHDRAWN FROM FISHING GROUND. JOHANNESSEN TOLD NEWS CONFERENCE THAT IT WAS NOT OUT OF THE QUESTION THAT ROYAL NAVY MOVE MIGHT RESULT IN A CHANGE IN ICELAND'S STATUS WITHIN NATO. HE SAID THAT ONLY INSTANCE OF MEMBER NATION USING FORCE AGAINST ANOTHER WAS IN ICELANDIC- BRITISH FISHERIES LIMITATION DISPUTES. WHEN ASKED IF HE REGARDED SITUATION AS " WAR- LIKE" HE REPLIED " YES, IN A WAY, BUT IT IS DIFFICULT TO CONCEIVE SUCH A SITUATION BETWEEN A BIG POWER SUCH AS BRITAIN AND AN UNARMED SMALL NATION LIKE ICELAND." HE ADDED THAT HE HOPED THERE WOULD BE NO NEED TO BREAK DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH HMG AND SAID THAT PROBLEM WOULD POSSIBLY BE DISCUSSED DURING NIXON- POMPIDOU VISIT. HE SAID HE REGARDED BRITISH MOVE AS " MISTAKE" WHICH WOULD CAUSE ICELANDERS MANY DIFFICULTIES. BRITISH GOVERNMENT SHOULD HAVE CONTROLLED TRAWLER CAPTAINS AND NOT THE REVERSE.

4. HANNIBAL VALDIMARSSON, MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (ORGANIZATION OF LIBERALS AND LEFTISTS). VALDIMARSSON DESCRIBED THE BRITISH ACTION AS INDEFENSIBLE, FOOLISH AND RUDE. EVERYTHING NECESSARY WILL BE DONE TO DEFEND ICELAND'S FISHING LIMITS. THE GOVERNMENT MUST STUDY THE QUESTION OF TURNING TO NAC AND UN SECURITY COUNCIL FOR ASSISTANCE. " MILITARY FORCE HAS BEEN USED AGAINST US AND THE TIME HAS ARRIVED TO SEEK OUT OUR BRETHREN AMONG NATIONS. Z LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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5. MINISTER OF INDUSTRIES MAGNUS KJARTANSSON (COMMUNIST- DOMINATED PEOPLE'S ALLIANCE. KJARTANSSON SAID THAT BRITISH HAVE " ATTACKED OUR FISHING JURISDICTION BY MILITARY FORCE" AND SAW IN THIS SEEDS OF A BRITISH DEFEAT. HE SAID INTERNATIONAL OPINION WAS IN ICELAND'S FAVOR. COMMENTING THAT HMG HAD INFORMED NATO OF

" ATTACK" BEFORE IT BEGAN AND NAC DID NOT REACT, HE SAID " WE MUST LOOK UPON THIS AS BEING A VERY UNFRIENDLY STAND TAKEN BY NATO TOWARDS US." KJARTANSSON ALSO CLAIMED THAT BRITISH INTERVENTION WAS A VIOLATION OF THE UN CHARTER.

6. MINISTER OF FISHERIES LUDVIK JOSEFSSON (COMMUNIST- DOMINATED PEOPLE' S ALLIANCE). JOSEFSSON ASSERTED, REGARDING NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE BRITISH, THAT THE SAME OFFERS WILL NOT BE OPEN TO THE BRITISH FOLLOWING THEIR INTERVENTION. HE SAID THAT THERE COULD BE NO TALKS WITH THE BRITISH UNDER SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES.

7. GEIR HALLGRIMSSON (VICE CHAIRMAN OF LEADING OPPOSITION INDEPENDENCE PARTY). HALLGRIMSSON SAID THAT THE MATTER SHOULD BE BROUGHT UP AT THE NATO MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE IN COPENHAGEN AND A DEMAND MADE THAT THE BRITISH CEASE THEIR ACTIVITIES. HE ALSO SUGGESTED THAT A STUDY BE MADE OF RAISING THE QUESTION AT THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL. HE PROPOSED THAT FONMIN TRAVEL TO NORDIC COUNTRIES TO EXPLAIN ICELAND' S POSITION AND ALSO SUGGESTED THAT GOI MIGHT HOST A CONFERENCE OF ALL STATES WHICH HAVE CLAIMED A FISHING LIMIT BEYOND 12 MILES. HE ALSO ASSERTED THAT NEGOTIATIONS WITH BRITISH COULD NOT TAKE PLACE WHILE ROYAL NAVY UNITS WERE WITHIN FISHING LIMITE.

8. BENEDIKT GRONDAL (VICE CHAIRMAN OF OPPOSITION SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY). GRONDAL CHARACTERIZED AS " STRANGE INDEED" BRITISH DECISION TO REVERT TO MILITARY FORCE. BRITISH ACTION CONFIRMED EFFECTIVENESS OF ICELANDIC COAST GUARD. HE SAID ICELAND SHOULD NOT ONLY PROTEST BRITISH ACTION BUT FOLLOW THROUGH BY GREATER PRESENTATION OF ICELANDIC CAUSE.

9. RAGNAR ARNALDS (CHAIRMAN OF COMMUNIST- DOMINATED PEOPLE' S ALLIANCE). ARNALDS INTERPRETED BRITISH MOVE AS A PROPAGANDA VICTORY FOR ICELAND SINCE IT WOULD CALL WORLD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ATTENTION TO ICELAND' S JUSTIFIABLE CLAIM AND TEND TO DISPLAY BRITISH AS GREAT POWER BULLY.

10. HARALDUR KROYER (ICELANDIC AMBASSADOR TO US AND UN). AMBASSADOR KROYER SAID THAT THERE WAS A POSSIBLE MAJORITY IN SECURITY COUNCIL FOR CONDEMNING BRITISH ACTION. IF GOI WERE TO PRESENT CASE " IT IS POSSIBLE THAT 8-9 STATES OF THE 15 ON THE COUNCIL WOULD VOTE IN FAVOR OF ICELAND WHILE BRITIAN WOULD BE CONDEMNED FOR NAVAL DEPLOYMENT INSIDE ICELAND' S FISHING JURISDICTION." IRVING

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